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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/356,445	07/19/1999	SATOSHI IWATA	614.1989	7838

21171 7590 05/11/2005

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EXAMINER

VO, CLIFF N

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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2671

DATE MAILED: 05/11/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/356,445

Applicant(s)

IWATA ET AL.

Examiner

CLIFF N VO

Art Unit

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 05 May 2003.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-30 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☒ Claim(s) 4,6,9-14,20,24 and 26 is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1,3,5,7,8,15 and 17-19 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 2,16,21-23,25 and 27-30 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
- ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
- ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

1. Applicant is advised that the Notice of Allowance mailed is vacated. If the issue fee has already been paid, applicant may request a refund or request that the fee be credited to a deposit account. However, applicant may wait until the application is either found allowable or held abandoned. If allowed, upon receipt of a new Notice of Allowance, applicant may request that the previously submitted issue fee be applied. If abandoned, applicant may request refund or credit to a specified Deposit Account.
2. The indicated allowability of claims 1, 3, 5, 7-8, 15 and 17-19 is withdrawn in view of the newly discovered reference(s) to Yamamoto (U.S. Patent No. 5,923,337). Rejections based on the newly cited reference(s) follow.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

3. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(e) the invention was described in a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention thereof by the applicant for patent, or on an international application by another who has fulfilled the requirements of paragraphs (1), (2), and (4) of section 371(c) of this title before the invention thereof by the applicant for patent.

The changes made to 35 U.S.C. 102(e) by the American Inventors Protection Act of 1999 (AIPA) and the Intellectual Property and High Technology Technical Amendments Act of 2002 do not apply when the reference is a U.S. patent resulting directly or indirectly from an international application filed before November 29, 2000. Therefore, the prior art date of the reference is determined under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) prior to the amendment by the AIPA (pre-AIPA 35 U.S.C. 102(e)).

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4. Claims 1, 3, 5, 7-8, 15 and 17-19 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Yamamoto (U.S. Patent No. 5,923,337).

As per independent claims 1 and 17, Yamamoto teaches a method and system for communicating through computer animated images comprising a means for generating a sequential character image (col.11, lines 17-19) by connecting a plurality of unit image groups (Fig.14, col.11, lines 26-30, i.e., "one or combination of groups such as happiness, anger, surprise and so on"), which are respectively defined and guaranteed in advance (col.11, lines 37-39; 48-53; col.12, lines 43-52, i.e., system always, "guaranteed", updates animation sequence based upon the received input, next orientation signal, "in advance") to indicate one communication information to a viewer (col.11, lines 39-44), and a means for displaying the sequential character image (col.11, lines 45-51).

Claim 3 is similar to claim 1, Yamamoto would have inherently included a computer program stored in a computer readable medium in order to instruct the computer graphics system cited at col.2, lines 29-32 to perform those steps as now cited in claim 3.

Claim 5 is similar to claim 1, Yamamoto further teaches a retrieving part reading based on the input attribute information and editing means at col.12, lines 35-52.

Claim 7 is similar to claim 5, Yamamoto would have inherently included a computer program stored in a computer readable medium in order to instruct the computer graphics system cited at col.2, lines 29-32 to perform those steps as now cited in claim 7.

Claim 8 is similar to claim 1, Yamamoto further teaches a control means at col.14, lines 52-57.

Claim 15 recites a method which performed by the system claim 1, thus it is rejected under a similar rationale.

As per dependent claims 18-19, Yamamoto further teaches the claimed features at Fig.24.

Allowable Subject Matter

5. Claims 4, 6, 9-14, 20, 24 and 26 allowed.
6. Claims 2, 16, 21-23, 25 and 27-30 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to CLIFF N VO whose telephone number is 571-272-7651. The examiner can normally be reached on 2nd Monday Off.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, MARK K ZIMMERMAN can be reached on 571-272-7653. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

Cliff Vo
4/14/2005

CV



MARK ZIMMERMAN
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 2600